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EXAMINER	
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ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/976,519	SHIMAKAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Lewis A. Bullock, Jr.	2195	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *29 August 2006*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,7,9 and 19-24* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,7,9 and 19-24* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 7, 9 and 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MITCHELL (U.S. Patent 6,349,301) in view of KUSUMOTO (U.S. Patent 6,954,728).

As to claim 1, MITCHELL teaches a virtual world system (virtual world environment employing a client-server architecture), comprising: a server computer (server / server computer); a plurality of terminal computers (client / client computers) connected to the server computer, wherein avatars (avatars) of operators (user) of the plurality of terminal computers are displayed in a virtual world generated on the server computer (col. 5, lines 12-21), and are caused to act on the basis of operations (each object has operations associated with the data / update) (col.4, lines 62-63; col. 3, lines 15-39) by the operators (users) of the plurality of terminal computers, each of the plurality of terminal computers being operable to make an object having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2) available on the terminal computer (client computer) to be controlled by the operations by the operator (user) of the terminal computer (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37), each of the plurality of terminal computers (client computers)

including a control unit (processor) operable to permit the operator of the terminal computer to participate in the virtual world (col. 6, lines 29-37) by transmitting information (change information / object information) regarding the operations by the operator to the server computer (server) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6) and, under control of the operator of the terminal computer (user), transmitting the object to the server computer (server) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), wherein the server computer (server) includes an object storage unit operable to store a plurality of the objects (server maintains a world database that contains the most up-to data version of the entire VWE and includes all objects disposed therein) (col. 7, lines 21-32) transmitted from ones of the plurality of terminal computers in association with information identifying the operators of the ones of the plurality of terminal computers (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); and object display means operable to display the plurality of objects in the virtual world on the plurality of terminal computers (clients) on the basis of the operations by the operators identified by the stored identifying information, using the information regarding the operations received from the plurality of terminal computers (via the users views and manipulates the objects on a display, e.g. by adding, deleting, or moving the objects within the VEW and all updates to the VWE are handled automatically and dynamically by the server) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach the operator solves a problem presented during the execution of a first program wherein

the first program is executable independently from a second program that displays the object.

KUSUMOTO teaches the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a first program on the terminal computer (via the client program displaying an advertisement selection ancillary control and allowing the user to solve the display by selecting advertisements to be associated with the avatar), the first program being executable independently from execution of a second program (the user performs the selection and placement process by using the client computer programs wherein the relevant information is transmitted to the servers and stored in consumer database and presentation tracking database) for displaying the object awarded from the problem (associated advertisement / associated incentive / reward) in the virtual world (wherein the server displays virtual money / award / advertisement in the virtual world associated with the user's avatar) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7, line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-20; col. 11, lines 34-53). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of MITCHELL with the teachings of KUSUMOTO in order to encourage consumer adoption and deployment of advertising within interactive on-line environments by providing financial and other incentives to users (col. 4, lines 28-32).

As to claim 19, MITCHELL teaches a server computer (server / server computer), comprising: an object record area (server maintains a world database that contains the most up-to data version of the entire VWE and includes all objects disposed therein)

(col. 7, lines 21-32) operable to store object data concerning objects displayable in a virtual world, the object data being stored in conformity with a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2); a virtual world control unit operable to generate the virtual world and to output object display information to participant terminals (client / client computers) in communication with the server computer for controlling display of the objects in the virtual world on the participant terminals in accordance with operations by operators of the participant terminals (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37); a communication control unit operable to receive the object data and information regarding the operations by the operators from the participant terminals (via the server handing all updates automatically and dynamically from the clients) (col. 6, lines 29-37; col. 6, line 43 – col. 7, line 32), wherein the object record area is operable to store the received object data in association with information identifying the operators of ones of the participant terminals having transmitted the object data (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), and the virtual world control unit is operable to output the object display information for display of the objects using the object data stored in the object record area in accordance with the received information regarding the operations by the operators and the stored information identifying the operators (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that

objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach the object data including objects awarded to operators of the participant terminals during the execution of a first program on the terminal wherein the first program is executable independently from a second program that displays the object in the virtual world.

KUSUMOTO teaches the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a first program on the terminal computer (via the client program displaying an advertisement selection ancillary control and allowing the user to solve the display by selecting advertisements to be associated with the avatar), the first program being executable independently from execution of a second program (the user performs the selection and placement process by using the client computer programs wherein the relevant information is transmitted to the servers and stored in consumer database and presentation tracking database) for displaying the object awarded from the problem (associated advertisement / associated incentive / reward) in the virtual world (wherein the server displays virtual money / award / advertisement in the virtual world associated with the user's avatar) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7, line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-20; col. 11, lines 34-53). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of MITCHELL with the teachings of KUSUMOTO in order to encourage consumer adoption and deployment of advertising within interactive on-line environments by providing financial and other incentives to users (col. 4, lines 28-32).

As to claim 22, MITCHELL teaches a virtual world system (virtual world environment employing a client-server architecture), comprising: a server computer (server / server computer) operable to generate a virtual world (virtual world); and a plurality of participant terminals (clients / client computers) in communication with the server computer, each participant terminal including a terminal display unit (display) operable to display an image and to enable an operator at the participant terminal to interact with the virtual world (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37), an object providing unit operable to make an object having a predetermined format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2) available on the participant terminal (client computer) to be controlled by the operations by the operator (user) of the participant terminal (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37), and a communication unit operable to transmit an object selected by the operator of the participant terminal to the server computer (server computer) (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), and the server computer including a storage unit operable to receive the selected object and to store the selected object in association with information identifying the operator of the participant terminal from which the selected object was transmitted (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users

manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), and a server display unit operable to generate information for display of stored virtual objects in a virtual world by the participant terminals on the basis of operations by the operators identified by the stored identifying information (via the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6) , the operations being communicated from the participant terminals (client computers) to the server computer (server computer), wherein the communication unit of each participant terminal is operable to receive the information generated by the server display unit, and the terminal display unit of each participant terminal is operable to generate the image using the information received from the server display unit (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach the operator solves a problem presented during the execution of a first program wherein the first program is executable independently from a second program that displays the object.

KUSUMOTO teaches the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a first program on the terminal computer (via the client program displaying an advertisement selection ancillary control and allowing the user to solve the display by selecting advertisements to be associated with the avatar), the first program being

executable independently from execution of a second program (the user performs the selection and placement process by using the client computer programs wherein the relevant information is transmitted to the servers and stored in consumer database and presentation tracking database) for displaying the object awarded from the problem (associated advertisement / associated incentive / reward) in the virtual world (wherein the server displays virtual money / award / advertisement in the virtual world associated with the user's avatar) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7, line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-20; col. 11, lines 34-53). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of MITCHELL with the teachings of KUSUMOTO in order to encourage consumer adoption and deployment of advertising within interactive on-line environments by providing financial and other incentives to users (col. 4, lines 28-32).

As to claim 20, MITCHELL teaches an information processor (client computer), comprising: a control unit (processor) operable to execute a game application (client application / game) to enable interactive game play by a player (user) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37) thereby presenting an object (artifact, etc) having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2), the control unit further being operable to display the object together with other items with which the object interacts in a virtual world (VWE) facilitated by a server computer (server / server computer) (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered

by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37); and a communication control unit operable to transmit the object and information concerning operations by the player to the server computer in association with information identifying the player for incorporation of the object in the virtual world (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6) and to receive from the server computer information for displaying the object together with the other items in accordance with the operations by the player (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach that the game application when executed presents a problem to be solved. Official Notice is taken in that it is well known in the art that a game application would present a problem to be solved by the player such that if the problem is solved the player is awarded a prize, i.e. an object. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the teachings of MITCHELL would present a problem and award an object upon answering the problem since MITCHELL executes a game application. However, MITCHELL does not teach executing a second program wherein the second program is executable independently from the game program that displays the object.

KUSUMOTO teaches the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a first program on the terminal computer (via the client program displaying an

advertisement selection ancillary control and allowing the user to solve the display by selecting advertisements to be associated with the avatar), the client program being executable independently from execution of displaying the objects and avatars (the user performs the selection and placement process by using the client computer programs wherein the relevant information is transmitted to the servers and stored in consumer database and presentation tracking database) for displaying the object awarded from the problem (associated advertisement / associated incentive / reward) in the virtual world (wherein the server displays virtual money / award / advertisement in the virtual world associated with the user's avatar) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7, line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-20; col. 11, lines 34-53). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of MITCHELL with the teachings of KUSUMOTO in order to encourage consumer adoption and deployment of advertising within interactive on-line environments by providing financial and other incentives to users (col. 4, lines 28-32).

As to claim 21, MITCHELL teaches a recording medium having information recorded thereon for performing a method of an object for incorporation in a virtual world (VWE) and displaying the object, the method comprising: executing a game application (client application / game) by an information processor to enable interactive game play by a player (user) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37) thereby providing an object having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2); transmitting the object from the information processor to

a server computer (server computer) (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); transmitting first information (update information / user information) concerning first operations by the player (user) from the information processor to the server computer (server computer) (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); incorporating the object in a virtual world generated by the server computer in accordance with the first information and second information (user information) regarding second operations by an operator (user) of at least one other information processor (other client computer) in communication with the server computer (via updating the other client computer based on perception information / bystander information wherein the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); and displaying the object at the information processor using information received from the server computer regarding the virtual world, wherein the information received from the server computer takes into account the first information and the second information (via updating the other client computer based on perception information / bystander information wherein the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the

users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6). However, MITCHELL does not teach that the game application when executed presents a problem to be solved. Official Notice is taken in that it is well known in the art that a game application would present a problem to be solved by the player such that if the problem is solved the player is awarded a prize, i.e. an object. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the teachings of MITCHELL would present a problem and award an object upon answering the problem since MITCHELL executes a game application. However, MITCHELL does not teach executing a second program wherein the second program is executable independently from the game program that displays the object.

KUSUMOTO teaches the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a first program on the terminal computer (via the client program displaying an advertisement selection ancillary control and allowing the user to solve the display by selecting advertisements to be associated with the avatar), the client program being executable independently from execution of displaying the objects and avatars (the user performs the selection and placement process by using the client computer programs wherein the relevant information is transmitted to the servers and stored in consumer database and presentation tracking database) for displaying the object awarded from the problem (associated advertisement / associated incentive / reward) in the virtual world (wherein the server displays virtual money / award / advertisement in the virtual world associated with the user's avatar) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7, line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-

20; col. 11, lines 34-53). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of MITCHELL with the teachings of KUSUMOTO in order to encourage consumer adoption and deployment of advertising within interactive on-line environments by providing financial and other incentives to users (col. 4, lines 28-32).

As to claim 23, MITCHELL teaches a method of handling an object for incorporation in a virtual world and display of the object, comprising: executing a game application (client application / game) by an information processor (client computer) to enable interactive game play by a player (user) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37) thereby providing an object (artifact, etc.) having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2); transmitting the object from the information processor to a server computer (server computer) (via the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); transmitting first information concerning first operations (changes of object attributes / update information / move information) by the player (user) from the information processor to the server computer (server computer) (via the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col.

7, line 6); incorporating the object in a virtual world (virtual world) generated by the server computer in accordance with the first information and second information (user information regarding objects of other client computer users stored by the server computer) regarding second operations (update information / move information) by the operator of at least one other information processor (other client computer) in communication with the server computer (server computer) (via updating the other client computer based on perception information / bystander information wherein the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); and displaying the object at the information processor using information received from the server computer (server computer) regarding the virtual world, wherein the information received from the server computer takes into account the first information and the second information (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach that the game application when executed presents a problem to be solved. Official Notice is taken in that it is well known in the art that a game application would present a problem to be solved by the player such that if the problem is solved the player is awarded a prize, i.e. an object. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the teachings of MITCHELL would present a problem and award an object upon answering the problem since MITCHELL executes a game application.

However, MITCHELL does not teach executing a second program wherein the second program is executable independently from the game program that displays the object.

KUSUMOTO teaches the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a first program on the terminal computer (via the client program displaying an advertisement selection ancillary control and allowing the user to solve the display by selecting advertisements to be associated with the avatar), the client program being executable independently from execution of displaying the objects and avatars (the user performs the selection and placement process by using the client computer programs wherein the relevant information is transmitted to the servers and stored in consumer database and presentation tracking database) for displaying the object awarded from the problem (associated advertisement / associated incentive / reward) in the virtual world (wherein the server displays virtual money / award / advertisement in the virtual world associated with the user's avatar) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7, line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-20; col. 11, lines 34-53). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of MITCHELL with the teachings of KUSUMOTO in order to encourage consumer adoption and deployment of advertising within interactive on-line environments by providing financial and other incentives to users (col. 4, lines 28-32).

As to claim 7, MITCHELL teaches permitting the player (user) to access the server computer (server computer) and to participate in the virtual world generated by the server computer, the step of displaying the object including displaying at least a

portion of the virtual world; and making the object available for control by the player in the virtual world (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display and the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 29-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6).

As to claim 9, MITCHELL teaches setting an attribute for the object which is transmitted to the server computer (server computer); and determining a mode in which the operator uses the object in the virtual world based on the attribute (via the object having a property such as location and performing a move operation to another room wherein the location would change) (col. 4, line 62 – col. 5, line 48; col. 6, lines 29-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6).

As to claim 24, KUSUMOTO teaches an object made available by the terminal computer to the operator during execution of the first program is not defined in the virtual world prior to the execution of the first program (via the advertisements / rewards are not associated with an user until the user selects the advertisement thereby associating the user with the advertisement / reward and sending such information to the server for displaying) (col. 6, lines 10-27; col. 6, lines 35-49; col. 6, line 59 – col. 7,

line 7; col. 7, line 22 – col. 8, line 8; col. 10, lines 19-41; col. 11, lines 8-20; col. 11, lines 34-53).

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed August 29, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the combination of Mitchell and Kusumoto does not teach nor suggest a system which satisfies the following requirements a) making an object available on a terminal computer; b) to be controlled by operations by the operator of the terminal computer; c) when the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a program on the terminal computer, in which d) the terminal computer is operable to perform the operator of the terminal computer to participate in the virtual world by transmitting information regarding operations of the operator to a server computer, in which the server computer includes e) object storage means operable to store a plurality of objects transmitted from ones of the plurality of terminal computers; and f) object display means operable to display a stored plurality of objects on a plurality of terminal computers on the basis of the operations of the operators...using information regarding the operations received from the plurality of terminal computers. The examiner disagrees. Applicant is arguing that the cited combination does not teach any of the limitations as outlined on page 9 of the response. On page 10-11, Applicant specifically pointed out how the limitations are not met. Applicant stated that the passage of Mitchell cited describes downloading objects from a server computer and the user's subsequent selection of one or more of them for display

by adding, deleting, or moving them within a VME. Applicant then states that Mitchell does not teach the server computer including an object storage means to store a plurality of objects transmitted from the terminal computers or that the objects are made available to the operator when the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a program on a terminal computer. Mitchell does state a world database is maintained at a server computer and is a central storehouse for data defining the entire VME, such that change to objects associated with a user or a user's avatar (via a change in the artifacts of a user or its avator) are propagated to the server and updated on other clients (see abstract, fig. 4; col. 3, lines 15-59; col. 6, lines 29-37). Mitchell also states that a well known VME is a multiple user game (col. 2, lines 30-57; col. 12, lines 36-49). Kusumoto teaches allowing advertisements to VME and on-line games wherein a user can select to modify its avatar or the surrounding VME through a selection screen. Using the selection screen / client computer programs a user indicates the relevant information and this information is stored in the server in association with the user / user's avatar such that whenever the avatar is to appear, the relevant advertisement is dynamically included so that other users whose avatars are nearby can view the advertisement (see col. 5, lines 36 – col. 6, line 57). The claims as defined do not express any limitations or interpretations of the problem or how it is solved. The examiner has mapped the problem displayed as the client program displaying the selection screen and wherein selecting advertisements to be associated with the user solves it. Therefore, the combination teaches the server computer including an object storage means to store a plurality of objects transmitted from the

terminal computers or that the objects are made available to the operator when the operator solves a problem presented during execution of a program on a terminal computer.

Applicant then states that Kusumoto neither teaches nor suggests displaying objects by a server computer on a plurality of terminal computers on the basis of operations by operators of the plurality of terminal computers, in which data regarding such operations is transmitted from the terminal computers to the server computer, based on which the server computer displays the objects. The examiner disagrees. Kusumoto teaches the advertisements are associated and displayed with the avatars wherein the virtual environment is managed by the server computer. Therefore, the combination teaches displaying objects (advertisements) by a server computer (via distributing the virtual world of avatars and their associated advertisements) on a plurality of terminal computers (avatars which represent various computer users are capable of seeing the advertisements when they are close to that particular user) on the basis of operations by operators of the plurality of terminal computers (via becoming within range of a user's avatar, allows you to see their advertisement), in which data regarding such operations is transmitted from the terminal computers to the server computer (via the server computer maintains a storage of which avatars are in the room or are affected by becoming in range of user's avatar to be updated and visualize those users' avatars).

Applicant then states that the advertisements taught by Kusumoto are not objects within the meaning of that term as used in claim 1. In particular the advertisements do

not meet requirement f) as stated above in that advertisements are not displayed on the basis of operations by operators of terminal computers based on information regarding the operations by the operators. The examiner disagrees. As outlined above the cited reference teaches that advertisements are displayed based on operations by operators. At column 9, line 30 – col. 10, line 10, col. 7, lines 5-21 and col. 6, lines 1-27 of Kusumoto teaches that the advertisement is displayed. In particular when the advertisement is on the avatar it is displayed to any avatar that comes in contact with the wearer. Therefore, as avatars interact throughout the virtual world, they see the advertisement of other avatars. Therefore, the limitation is met by the combination as disclosed.

Therefore, since the limitations are met based on the rejection and response provided above the rejection is maintained.

Conclusion

2. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lewis A. Bullock, Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272-3759. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng An can be reached on (571) 272-3756. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

November 9, 2006

LEWIS A. BULLOCK, JR.
PRIMARY EXAMINER